

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 14036 080253Z

62

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6387

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 14036

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP/THIEU) TH

SUBJ: THIEU VISIT TO THAILAND

REF: BANGKOK 11598

1. DR. BUI TIEN RUNG, THE GVN EMBASSY COUNSELOR IN BANGKOK, CONFIRMED SEPTEMBER 7 THAT PRESIDENT THIEU WOULD BE PAYING A THREE DAY "STATE" VISIT TO THAILAND IN EARLY NOVEMBER. THE OBJECTIVE WOULD BE TO THANK THAILAND FOR ITS TROOP SUPPORT DURING THE HEIGHT OF HOSTILITIES IN SOUTH VIETNAM. RUNG SAID THAT THE EXTREME FORMALITIES AND PROTOCOL INVOLVED IN A STATE VISIT WOULD LEAVE LITTLE TIME FOR SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS. HE SAID THAT NORMALLY DURING THIS TYPE OF VISIT A TWO HOUR SESSION IS SCHEDULED WITH THE COMPLETE CABINET. THAT MIGHT PROVIDE THE ONLY OCCASION FOR EXCHANGE OF POLITICAL AND MILITARY VIEWS OF COMMON INTEREST BETWEEN THAILAND AND SOUTH VIETNAM.

2. RUNG INDICATED THAT SHORTENING TO THREE DAYS OF THE USUAL SEVEN DAYS FOR A STATE VISIT WAS NECESSARY BECAUSE THIEU COULD NOT BE GONE ANY LONGER THAN THAT FROM VIETNAM.

3. COMMENT: WE DO NOT GET THE IMPRESSION THAT RUNG
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PAGE 02 BANGKO 14036 080253Z

WAS DELIBERATELY DOWNPLAYING THE OPPORTUNITY FOR SUB-

STANTIVE INTERCHANGES ON SITUATION IN VIETNAME, CAMBODIA, THE
CONTINENTAL SHELF, FISHING WATERS, AND THE VIETNAMES
REFUGEES IN THAILAND. GIVEN A MEETING WITH THE KING
AND OTHER CEREMONIAL EVENTS, THERE PROBABLY WILL BE
LITTLE TIME FOR DISCUSSION OF THESE TOPICS, BUT SOME IS
BOUND TO TAKE PLACE. FROM THIS VANTAGE POINT IT STRIKES
US THAT THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE THIEU VISIT IS TO
STRENGTHEN HIS DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL
STANDING. THE RTG WAS READY TO WELCOME HIM FOR A
MUCH LESS FORMAL "OFFICIAL" VISIT IN EARLY AUGUST (REFTEL)
AND WILL, WE BELIEVE, DO EVERYTHING NECESSARY TO MAKE VISIT THIS
MONTH SUCCESSFUL.
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